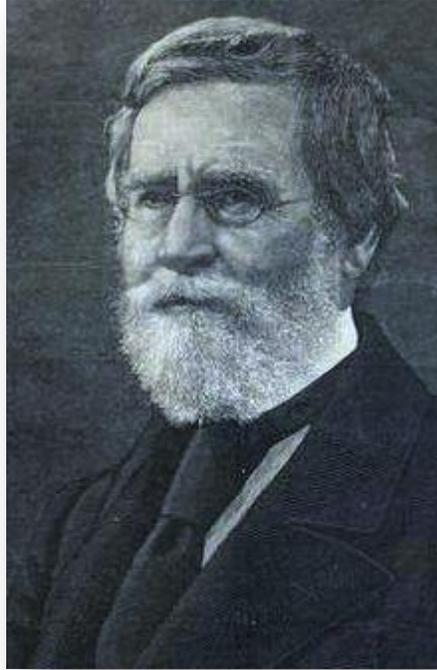


THOUGHTAUDIO



JULIUS CAESAR

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CAESAR EMPEROR

Although Pompey himself had been killed, and the army under his immediate command entirely annihilated, Caesar did not find that the empire was yet completely submissive to his sway. As the tidings of his conquests spread over the vast and distant regions which were under the Roman rule — although the story itself of his exploits might have been exaggerated — the impression produced by his power lost something of its strength, as men generally have little dread of remote danger. While he was in Egypt, there were three great concentrations of power formed against him in other quarters of the globe: in Asia Minor, in Africa, and in Spain.

In putting down these three great and formidable arrays of opposition, Caesar made an exhibition to the world of that astonishing promptness and celerity of military action on which his fame as a general so much depends. He went first to Asia Minor, and fought a great and decisive battle there, in a manner so sudden and unexpected to the forces that opposed him that they found themselves defeated almost before they suspected that their enemy was near. It was in reference to this battle that he wrote the inscription for the banner, "Veni, vidi, vici" or, "I came, looked, and conquered."

In the meantime, Caesar's prosperity and success had greatly strengthened his cause at Rome. Rome was supported in a great measure by the contributions brought home from the provinces by the various military heroes who were sent out to govern them; and, of course, the greater and more successful was the conqueror, the better was he qualified for stations of highest authority in the estimation of the inhabitants of the city. They made Caesar dictator even while he was away, and appointed Mark Antony his master of horse. This was the same Antony whom we have already mentioned as having been connected with Cleopatra after Caesar's death.

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Rome, in fact, was filled with the fame of Caesar's exploits, and, as he crossed the Adriatic and advanced toward the city, he found himself the object of universal admiration and applause. But he could not yet be contented to establish himself quietly at Rome. There was a large force organized against him in Africa under Cato, a stern and indomitable man, who had long been an enemy to Caesar, and who now considered him as a usurper and an enemy of the republic, and was determined to resist him to the last extremity. There was also a large force assembled in Spain under the command of two sons of Pompey, in whose case the ordinary political hostility of contending partisans was rendered doubly intense and bitter by their desire to avenge their father's cruel fate. Caesar determined first to go to Africa, and then, after disposing of Cato's resistance, to cross the Mediterranean into Spain.

Before he could set out, however, on these expeditions, he was involved in very serious difficulties for a time, on account of a great discontent which prevailed in his army, and which ended at last in open mutiny. The soldiers complained that they had not received the rewards and honors, which Caesar had promised them. Some claimed offices, others money others lands, which, as they maintained, they had been led to expect would be conferred upon them at the end of the campaign. The fact undoubtedly was, that, elated with their success, and intoxicated with the spectacle of the boundless influence and power which their general so obviously wielded at Rome, they formed expectations and hopes for themselves altogether too wild and unreasonable to be realized by soldiers; for soldiers, however much they may be flattered by their generals in going into battle, or praised in the mass in official dispatches, are after all but slaves, and slaves, too, of the very humblest caste and character.

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The famous tenth legion, Cesar's favorite corps, took the most active part in fomenting these discontents, as might naturally have been expected, since the attentions and the praises which he had bestowed upon them, though at first they tended to awaken their ambition, and to inspire them with redoubled ardor and courage, ended, as such favoritism always does, in making them vain, self-important, and unreasonable. Led on thus by the tenth legion, the whole army mutinied. They broke up the camp where they had been stationed at some distance beyond the walls of Rome, and marched toward the city.

Soldiers in a mutiny, even though headed by their subaltern officers, are very little under command; and these Roman troops, feeling released from their usual restraints, committed various excesses on the way, terrifying the inhabitants and spreading universal alarm. The people of the city were thrown into utter consternation at the approach of the vast horde, which was coming like a terrible avalanche to descend upon them. The army expected some signs of resistance at the gates, which, if offered, they were prepared to encounter and overcome. Their plan was, after entering the city, to seek Caesar and demand their discharge from his service.

They knew that he was under the necessity of immediately making a campaign in Africa, and that, of course, he could not possibly, as they supposed, dispense with them. He would, consequently, if they asked their discharge, beg them to remain, and, to induce them to do it, would comply with all their expectations and desires. Such was their plan. To tender, however, a resignation of an office as a means of bringing an opposite party to terms, is always a very hazardous experiment. We easily overrate the estimation in which our own services are held taking what is said to us in kindness or courtesy by friends as the sober and deliberate judgment of the public; and thus it often happens that persons who in such case offer to resign, are astonished to find their resignations readily accepted.

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When Caesar's mutineers arrived at the gates, they found, instead of opposition, only orders from Caesar, by which they were directed to leave all their arms except their swords, and march into the city. They obeyed. They were then directed to go to the Campus Martius, a vast parade ground situated within the walls, and to await Caesar's orders there.

Caesar met them in the Campus Martius, and demanded why they had left their encampment without orders and come to the city. They stated in reply, as they had previously planned to do, that they wished to be discharged from the public service. To their great astonishment, Caesar seemed to consider this request as nothing at all extraordinary, but promised, on the other hand, very readily to grant it. He said that they should be at once discharged, and should receive faithfully all the rewards which had been promised them at the close of the war for their long and arduous services. At the same time, he expressed his deep regret that, to obtain what he was perfectly willing and ready at any time to grant, they should have so far forgotten their duties as Romans, and violated the discipline which should always be held absolutely sacred by every soldier. He particularly regretted that the tenth legion, on which he had been long accustomed so implicitly to rely, should have taken a part in such transactions.

In making this address, Caesar assumed a kind and considerate, and even respectful tone toward his men, calling them *Quirites* instead of soldiers — an honorary mode of appellation, which recognized them as constituent members of the Roman commonwealth. The effect of the whole transaction was what might have been anticipated. A universal desire was awakened throughout the whole army to return to their duty. They sent deputations to Caesar, begging not to be taken at their word, but to be retained in the service, and allowed to accompany him to Africa.

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After much hesitation and delay, Caesar consented to receive them again, all excepting the tenth legion, who, he said, had now irrevocably lost his confidence and regard. It is a striking illustration of the strength of the attachment, which bound Caesar's soldiers to their commander, that the tenth legion would not be discharged, after all. They followed Caesar of their own accord into Africa, earnestly entreating him again and again to receive them. He finally did receive them in detachments, which he incorporated with the rest of his army, or sent on distant service, but he would never organize them as the tenth legion again.

It was now early in the winter, a stormy season for crossing the Mediterranean Sea. Caesar, however, set off from Rome immediately, proceeded south to Sicily, and encamped on the sea-shore there till the fleet was ready to convey his forces to Africa. The usual fortune attended him in the African campaigns His fleet was exposed to imminent dangers in crossing the sea, but, in consequence of the extreme deliberation and skill with which his arrangements were made, he escaped them all. He overcame one after another of the military difficulties which were in his way in Africa. His army endured, in the depth of winter, great exposures and fatigues, and they had to encounter a large hostile force under the charge of Cato. They were, however, successful in every undertaking. Cato retreated at last to the city of Utica, where he shut himself up with the remains of his army;

but finding, at length, when Caesar drew near, that there was no hope or possibility of making good his defense, and as his stern and indomitable spirit could not endure the thought of submission to one whom he considered as an enemy to his country and a traitor he resolved upon a very effectual mode of escaping from his conqueror's power. He feigned to abandon all hope of defending the city, and began to make arrangements to facilitate the escape of his soldiers over the sea.

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He collected the vessels in the harbor, and allowed all to embark who were willing to take the risks of the stormy water. He took, apparently, great interest in the embarkations, and, when evening came on, he sent repeatedly down to the seaside to inquire about the state of the wind and the progress of the operations. At length he retired to his apartment, and, when all was quiet in the house, he lay down upon his bed and stabbed himself with his sword. He fell from the bed by the blow, or else from the effect of some convulsive motion which the penetrating steel occasioned. His son and servants, hearing the fall, came rushing into the room, raised him from the floor, and attempted to bind up and stanch the wound. Cato would not permit them to do it. He resisted them violently as soon as he was conscious of what they intended. Finding that a struggle would only aggravate the horrors of the scene, and even hasten its termination, they left the bleeding hero to his fate, and in a few minutes, he died.

The character of Cato, and the circumstances under which his suicide was committed, make it, on the whole, the most conspicuous act of suicide which history records; and the events which followed show in an equally conspicuous manner the extreme folly of the deed. In respect to its wickedness, Cato, not having had the light of Christianity before him, is to be leniently judged. As to the folly of the deed, however, he is to be held strictly accountable. If he had lived and yielded to his conqueror, as he might have done gracefully and without dishonor, since all his means of resistance were exhausted, Caesar would have treated him with generosity and respect, and would have taken him to Rome;

and as within a year or two of this time Caesar himself was no more, Cato's vast influence and power might have been, and undoubtedly would have been, called most effectually into action for the benefit of his country. If anyone, in defending Cato, should say he could not foresee this, we reply, he could have foreseen it; not the precise events, indeed, which occurred, but he could have foreseen that vast changes must take place,

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and new aspects of affairs arise, in which his powers would be called into requisition. We can always foresee in the midst of any storm, however dark and gloomy, that clear skies will certainly sooner or later come again; and this is just as true metaphorically in respect to the vicissitudes of human life, as it is literally in regard to the ordinary phenomena of the skies.

From Africa Caesar returned to Rome, and from Rome he went to subdue the resistance which was offered by the sons of Pompey in Spain. He was equally successful here. The oldest son was wounded in battle, and was carried off from the field upon a litter faint and almost dying. He recovered in some degree, and, finding escape from the eager pursuit of Caesar's soldiers impossible, he concealed himself in a cave, where he lingered for a little time in destitution and misery. He was discovered at last; his head was cut off by his captors and sent to Caesar, as his father's had been. The younger son succeeded in escaping, but he became a wretched fugitive and outlaw, and all manifestations of resistance to Caesar's sway disappeared from Spain. The conqueror returned to Rome the undisputed master of the whole Roman world.

Then came his triumphs. Triumphs were great celebrations, by which military heroes in the days of the Roman commonwealth signalized their victories on their return to the city. Caesar's triumphs were four, one for each of his four great successful campaigns, viz., in Egypt, in Asia Minor, in Africa, and in Spain. Each was celebrated on a separate day, and there was an interval of several days between them, to magnify their importance, and swell the general interest, which they excited among the vast population of the city. On one of these days, the triumphal car in which Caesar rode, which was most magnificently adorned, broke down on the way, and Caesar was nearly thrown out of it by the shock.

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The immense train of cars, horses, elephants, flags, banners, captives, and trophies which formed the splendid procession was all stopped by the accident, and a considerable delay ensued. Night came on, in fact before the column could again be put in motion to enter the city, and then Caesar, whose genius was never more strikingly shown than when he had opportunity to turn a calamity to advantage, conceived the idea of employing the forty elephants of the train as torch-bearers; the long procession accordingly advanced through the streets and ascended to the Capitol, lighted by the great blazing flambeaus which the sagacious and docile beasts were easily taught to bear, each elephant holding one in his proboscis, and waving it above the crowd around him.

In these triumphal processions, everything was borne in exhibition which could serve as a symbol of the conquered country or a trophy of victory, Flags and banners taken from the enemy; vessels of gold and silver, and other treasures, loaded in vans; wretched captives conveyed in open carriages or marching sorrowfully on foot, and destined, some of them, to public execution when the ceremony of the triumph was ended; displays of arms, and implements, and dresses, and all else which might serve to give the Roman crowd an idea of the customs and usages of the remote and conquered nations; the animals they used, caparisoned in the manner in which they used them: these, and a thousand other trophies and emblems, were brought into the line to excite the admiration of the crowd, and to add to the gorgeousness of the spectacle.

In fact, it was always a great object of solicitude and exertion with all the Roman generals, when on distant and dangerous expeditions, to possess themselves of every possible prize in the progress of their campaign, which could aid in adding splendor to the triumph which was to signalize its end. In these triumphs of Caesar, a young sister of Cleopatra was in the line of the Egyptian procession. In that devoted to Asia Minor was a great banner containing the words already referred to, Veni, Vidi, Vici.

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There were great paintings, too, borne aloft, representing battles and other striking scenes. Of course, all Rome was in the highest state of excitement during the days of the exhibition of this pageantry. The whole surrounding country flocked to the capital to witness it, and Caesar's greatness and glory were signalized in the most conspicuous manner to all mankind.

After these triumphs, a series of splendid public entertainments were given, over twenty thousand tables having been spread for the populace of the city. Shows of every possible character and variety were exhibited. There were dramatic plays, and equestrian performances in the circus, and gladiatorial combats, and battles with wild beasts, and dances, and chariot races, and every other imaginable amusement which could be devised and carried into effect to gratify a population highly cultivated in all the arts of life, but barbarous and cruel in heart and character. Some of the accounts which have come down to us of the magnificence of the scale on which these entertainments were conducted are absolutely incredible. It is said, for example, that an immense basin was constructed near the Tiber, large enough to contain two fleets of galleys, which had on board two thousand rowers each, and one thousand fighting men.

These fleets were then manned with captives, the one with Asiatics and the other with Egyptians, and when all was ready, they were compelled to fight a real battle for the amusement of the spectators which thronged the shores, until vast numbers were killed, and the waters of the lake were dyed with blood. It is also said that the whole Forum, and some of the great streets in the neighborhood where the principal gladiatorial shows were held, were covered with silken awnings to protect the vast crowds of spectators from the sun, and thousands of tents were erected to accommodate the people from the surrounding country, whom the buildings of the city could not contain.

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All open opposition to Caesar's power and dominion now entirely disappeared. Even the Senate vied with the people in rendering him every possible honor. The supreme power had been hitherto lodged in the hands of two consuls, chosen annually, and the Roman people had been extremely jealous of any distinction for any one, higher than that of an elective annual office, with a return to private life again when the brief period should have expired. They now, however, made Caesar, in the first place, consul for ten years, and then Perpetual Dictator.

They conferred upon him the title of the Father of his Country. The name of the month in which he was born was changed to Julius, from his praenomen, and we still retain the name. He was made, also, commander-in-chief of all the armies of the commonwealth, the title to which vast military power was expressed in the Latin language by the word EMPEROR. Caesar was highly elated with all these substantial proofs of the greatness and glory to which he had attained, and was also very evidently gratified with smaller, but equally expressive proofs of the general regard. Statues representing his person were placed in the public edifices, and borne in processions like those of the gods.

Conspicuous and splendidly ornamented seats were constructed for him in all the places of public assembly, and on these he sat to listen to debates or witness spectacles, as if he were upon a throne. He had, either by his influence or by his direct power, the control of all the appointments to office, and was, in fact, in everything but the name, a sovereign and an absolute king.

He began now to form great schemes of internal improvement for the general benefit of the empire. He wished to increase still more the great obligations, which the Roman people were under to him for what he had already done. They really were under vast obligations to him; for, considering Rome as a community, which was to subsist by

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governing the world, Caesar had immensely enlarged the means of its subsistence by establishing its sway everywhere, and providing for an incalculable increase of its revenues from the tribute and the taxation of conquered provinces and kingdoms. Since this work of conquest was now completed, he turned his attention to the internal affairs of the empire, and made many improvements in the system of administration, looking carefully into everything, and introducing everywhere those exact and systematic principles which such a mind as his seeks instinctively in everything over which it has any control. One great change which he effected continues in perfect operation throughout Europe to the present day.

It related to the division of time. The system of months in use in his day corresponded so imperfectly with the annual circuit of the sun, that the months were moving continually along the year in such a manner that the winter months came at length in the summer, and the summer months in the winter. This led to great practical inconveniences; for whenever, for example, anything was required by law to be done in certain months, intending to have them done in the summer, and the specified month came at length to be a winter month, the law would require the thing to be done in exactly the wrong season.

Caesar remedied all this by adopting a new system of months, which should give three hundred and sixty-five days to the year for three years, and three hundred and sixty-six for the fourth; and so exact was the system which he thus introduced, that it went on unchanged for sixteen centuries. The months were then found to be eleven days out of the way, when a new correction was introduced, and it will now go on three thousand years before the error will amount to a single day. Caesar employed a Greek astronomer to arrange the system that he adopted; and it was in part on account of the improvement which he thus effected that one of the months, as has already been mentioned, was called July. Its name before was Quintilis.

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Caesar formed a great many other vast and magnificent schemes. He planned public buildings for the city, which were going to exceed in magnitude and splendor all the edifices of the world. He commenced the collection of vast libraries, formed plans for draining the Pontine Marshes, for bringing great supplies of water into the city by an aqueduct, for cutting a new passage for the Tiber from Rome to the sea, and making an enormous artificial harbor at its mouth. He was going to make a road along the Apennines, and cut a canal through the Isthmus of Corinth, and construct other vast works, which were to make Rome the center of the commerce of the world. In a word, his head was filled with the grandest schemes, and he was gathering around him all the means and resources necessary for the execution of them.

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THE CONSPIRACY

Caesar's greatness and glory came at last to a very sudden and violent end. He was assassinated. All the attendant circumstances of this deed, too, were of the most extraordinary character, and thus the dramatic interest which adorns all parts of the great conqueror's history marks strikingly its end.

His prosperity and power awakened, of course, a secret jealousy and ill will. Those who were disappointed in their expectations of his favor murmured. Others, who had once been his rivals, hated him for having triumphed over them. Then there was a stern spirit of democracy, too, among certain classes of the citizens of Rome, which could not brook a master. It is true that the sovereign power in the Roman commonwealth had never been shared by all the inhabitants. It was only in certain privileged classes that the sovereignty was vested; but among these the functions of government were divided and distributed in such a way as to balance one interest against another, and to give all their proper share of influence and authority. Terrible struggles and conflicts often occurred among these various sections of society, as one or another attempted from time to time to encroach upon the rights or privileges of the rest.

These struggles, however, ended usually in at last restoring again the equilibrium which had been disturbed. No one power could ever gain the entire ascendancy; and thus, as all monarchism seemed excluded from their system, they called it a republic. Caesar, however, had now concentrated in himself all the principal elements of power, and there began to be suspicions that he wished to make himself in name and openly, as well as secretly and in fact, a king.

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The Romans abhorred the very name of king. They had had kings in the early periods of their history, but they made themselves odious by their pride and their oppressions, and the people had deposed and expelled them.

They had managed their empire now for five hundred years as a republic, and though they had had internal dissensions, conflicts, and quarrels without end, had persisted so firmly and unanimously in their detestation of all regal authority, that no one of the long line of ambitious and powerful statesmen, generals, or conquerors by which the history of the empire had been signalized, had ever dared to aspire to the name of king. There began, however, soon to appear some indications that Caesar, who certainly now possessed regal power, would like the regal name. Ambitious men, in such cases, do not directly assume themselves the titles and symbols of royalty. Others make the claim for them, while they faintly disavow it, till they have opportunity to see what effect the idea produces on the public mind. The following incidents occurred which it was thought indicated such a design on the part of Caesar.

There were in some of the public buildings certain statues of kings; for it must be understood that the Roman dislike to kings was only a dislike to having kingly authority exercised over themselves. They respected and sometimes admired the kings of other countries, and honored their exploits, and made statues to commemorate their fame. They were willing that kings should reign elsewhere, so long as there were no king of Rome. The American feeling at the present day is much the same. If the Queen of England were to make a progress through this country, she would receive, perhaps, as many and as striking marks of attention and honor as would be rendered to her in her own realm. We venerate the antiquity of her royal line; we admire the efficiency of her government and the sublime grandeur of her empire, and have as high an idea as any, of the powers and prerogatives of her crown — and these feelings would show themselves most abundantly

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on any proper occasion. We are willing, nay, wish that she should continue to reign over Englishmen; and yet, after all, it would take some millions of bayonets to place a queen securely upon a throne over this land.

Regal power was accordingly, in the abstract, looked up to at Rome, as it is elsewhere, with great respect; and it was, in fact, all the more tempting as an object of ambition, from the determination felt by the people that it should not be exercised there. There were, accordingly, statues of kings at Rome. Caesar placed his own statue among them. Some approved, others murmured. There was a public theater in the city, where the officers of the government were accustomed to sit in honorable seats prepared expressly for them, those of the Senate being higher and more distinguished than the rest. Caesar had a seat prepared for himself there, similar in form to a throne, and adorned it magnificently with gilding and ornaments of gold, which gave it the entire pre-eminence over all the other seats.

He had a similar throne placed in the senate chamber, to be occupied by himself when attending there, like the throne of the King of England in the House of Lords. He held, moreover, a great many public celebrations and triumphs in the city in commemoration of his exploits and honors; and, on one of these occasions, it was arranged that the Senate were to come to him at a temple in a body, and announce to him certain decrees which they had passed to his honor. Vast crowds had assembled to witness the ceremony Caesar was seated in a magnificent chair, which might have been called either a chair or a throne, and was surrounded by officers and attendants.

When the Senate approached, Caesar did not rise to receive them, but remained seated, like a monarch receiving a deputation of his subjects. The incident would not seem to be in itself of any great importance, but, considered as an indication of Caesar's designs, it attracted great attention, and produced a very general excitement. The act was adroitly

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managed so as to be somewhat equivocal in its character, in order that it might be represented one way or the other on the following day, according as the indications of public sentiment might incline. Some said that Caesar was intending to rise, but was prevented, and held down by those who stood around him.

Others said that an officer motioned to him to rise, but he rebuked his interference by a frown, and continued his seat. Thus while, in fact, he received the Roman Senate as their monarch and sovereign, his own intentions and designs in so doing were left somewhat in doubt, in order to avoid awakening a sudden and violent opposition.

Not long after this, as he was returning in public from some great festival, the streets being full of crowds, and the populace following him in great throngs with loud acclamations, a man went up to his statue as he passed it, and placed upon the head of it a laurel crown, fastened with a white ribbon, which was a badge of royalty. Some officers ordered the ribbon to be taken down, and sent the man to prison. Caesar was very much displeased with the officers, and dismissed them from their office. He wished, he said, to have the opportunity to disavow, himself, such claims, and not to have others disavow them for him.

Caesar's disavowals were, however, so faint, and people had so little confidence in their sincerity, that the cases became more and more frequent in which the titles and symbols of royalty were connected with his name. The people who wished to gain his favor saluted him in public with the name of *Rex*, the Latin word for king. He replied that his name was Caesar, not *Rex*, showing, however, no other signs of displeasure. On one great occasion, a high public officer, a near relative of his, repeatedly placed a diadem upon his head, Caesar himself, as often as he did it, gently putting it off. At last he sent the diadem away to a temple that was near, saying that there was no king in Rome but

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Jupiter. In a word, all his conduct indicated that he wished to have it appear that the people were pressing the crown upon him, when he himself was steadily refusing it.

This state of things produced a very strong and universal, though suppressed excitement in the city. Parties were formed. Some began to be willing to make Caesar king; others were determined to hazard their lives to prevent it. None dared, however, openly to utter their sentiments on either side. They expressed them by mysterious looks and dark intimations. At the time when Caesar refused to rise to receive the Senate, many of the members withdrew in silence, and with looks of offended dignity.

When the crown was placed upon his statue or upon his own brow, a portion of the populace would applaud with loud acclamations; and whenever he disavowed these acts, either by words or counteractions of his own, an equally loud acclamation would arise from the other side. On the whole, however, the idea that Caesar was gradually advancing toward the kingdom steadily gained ground.

And yet Caesar himself spoke frequently with great humility in respect to his pretensions and claims; and when he found public sentiment turning against the ambitious schemes he seems secretly to have cherished, he would present some excuse or explanation for his conduct plausible enough to answer the purpose of a disavowal. When he received the Senate, sitting like a king, on the occasion before referred to, when they read to him the decrees which they had passed in his favor, he replied to them that there was more need of diminishing the public honors which he received than of increasing them.

When he found, too, how much excitement his conduct on that occasion had produced, he explained it by saying that he had retained his sitting posture on account of the infirmity of his health, as it made him dizzy to stand. He thought, probably, that these pretexts would tend to quiet the strong and turbulent spirits around him, from whose envy or

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rivalry he had most to fear, without at all interfering with the effect, which the act itself would have produced upon the masses of the population. He wished, in a word, to accustom them to see him assume the position and the bearing of a sovereign, while, by his apparent humility in his intercourse with those immediately around him, he avoided as much as possible irritating and arousing the jealous and watchful rivals who were next to him in power.

If this were his plan, it seemed to be advancing prosperously toward its accomplishment. The population of the city seemed to become more and more familiar with the idea that Caesar was about to become a king. The opposition which the idea had at first awakened appeared to subside, or, at least, the public expression of it, which daily became more and more determined and dangerous, was restrained. At length the time arrived when it appeared safe to introduce the subject to the Roman Senate. This, of course, was a hazardous experiment. It was managed, however, in a very adroit and ingenious manner.

There were in Rome, and, in fact, in many other cities and countries of the world in those days, a variety of prophetic books, called the Sibylline Oracles, in which it was generally believed that future events were foretold. Some of these volumes or rolls, which were very ancient and of great authority, were preserved in the temples at Rome, under the charge of a board of guardians, who were to keep them with the utmost care, and to consult them on great occasions, in order to discover beforehand what would be the result of public measures or great enterprises which were in contemplation.

It happened that at this time the Romans were engaged in a war with the Parthians, a very wealthy and powerful nation of Asia. Caesar was making preparations for an expedition to the East to attempt to subdue this people. He gave orders that the Sibylline Oracles should be consulted. The proper officers, after consulting them with the usual solemn ceremonies, reported to the Senate that they found it recorded in these sacred prophecies

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that the Parthians could not be conquered except by a king. A senator proposed, therefore, that, to meet the emergency, Caesar should be made king during the war. There was at first no decisive action on this proposal. It was dangerous to express any opinion. People were thoughtful, serious, and silent, as on the eve of some great convulsion. No one knew what others were meditating, and thus did not dare to express his own wishes or designs. There soon, however, was a prevailing understanding that Caesar's friends were determined on executing the design of crowning him, and that the fifteenth of March, called, in their phraseology, the Ides of March, was fixed upon as the coronation day.

In the meantime, Caesar's enemies, though to all outward appearance quiet and calm, had not been inactive. Finding that his plans were now ripe for execution, and that they had no, open means of resisting them, they formed a conspiracy to assassinate Caesar himself, and thus bring his ambitious schemes to an effectual and final end. The name of the original leader of this conspiracy was Cassius. Cassius had been for a long time Caesar's personal rival and enemy.

He was a man of a very violent and ardent temperament, impetuous and fearless, very fond of exercising power himself, but very restless and uneasy in having it exercised over him. He had all the Roman repugnance to being under the authority of a master, with an additional personal determination of his own not to submit to Caesar. He determined to slay Caesar rather than to allow him to be made a king, and he went to work, with great caution, to bring other leading and influential men to join him in this determination. Some of those to whom he applied said that they would unite with him in his plot provided he would get Marcus Brutus to join them.

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Brutus was the praetor of the city. The praetorship of the city was a very high municipal office. The conspirators wished to have Brutus join them partly on account of his station as a magistrate, as if they supposed that by having the highest public magistrate of the city for their leader in the deed, the destruction of their victim would appear less like a murder, and would be invested, instead, in some respects, with the sanctions and with the dignity of an official execution.

Then, again, they wished for the moral support which would be afforded them in their desperate enterprise by Brutus's extraordinary personal character. He was younger than Cassius, but he was grave, thoughtful, taciturn, calm — a man of inflexible integrity, of the coolest determination, and, at the same time, of the most undaunted courage. The conspirators distrusted one another, for the resolution of impetuous men is very apt to fail when the emergency arrives which puts it to the test; but as for Brutus, they knew very well that whatever he undertook he would most certainly do.

There was a great deal even in his name. It was a Brutus that five centuries before had been the main instrument of the expulsion of the Roman kings. He had secretly meditated the design, and, the better to conceal it, had feigned idiocy, as the story was, that he might not be watched or suspected until the favorable hour for executing his design should arrive. He therefore ceased to speak, and seemed to lose his reason; he wandered about the city silent and gloomy, like a brute. His name had been Lucius Junius before. They added Brutus now, to designate his condition.

When at last, however, the crisis arrived which he judged favorable for the expulsion of the kings, he suddenly reassumed his speech and his reason, called the astonished Romans to arms, and triumphantly accomplished his design. His name and memory had been cherished ever since that day as of a great deliverer.

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They, therefore, who looked upon Caesar as another king, naturally turned their thoughts to the Brutus of their day, hoping to find in him another deliverer. Brutus found, from time to time, inscriptions on his ancient namesake's statue expressing the wish that he were now alive. He also found each morning, as he came to the tribunal where he was accustomed to sit in the discharge of the duties of his office, brief writings, which had been left there during the night, in which few words expressed deep meaning, such as "Awake, Brutus, to thy duty;" and "Art thou indeed a Brutus?"

Still it seemed hardly probable that Brutus could be led to take a decided stand against Caesar, for they had been warm personal friends ever since the conclusion of the civil wars. Brutus had, indeed, been on Pompey's side while that general lived; he fought with him at the battle of Pharsalia, but he had been taken prisoner there, and Caesar, instead of executing him as a traitor, as most victorious generals in a civil war would have done, spared his life, forgave him for his hostility, received him into his own service, and afterward raised him to very high and honorable stations. He gave him the government of the richest province, and, after his return from it, loaded with wealth and honors, he made him praetor of the city. In a word, it would seem that he had done everything which it was possible to do to make him one of his most trustworthy and devoted friends. The men, therefore, to whom Cassius first applied, perhaps thought that they were very safe in saying that they would unite in the intended conspiracy if he would get Brutus to join them.

They expected Cassius himself to make the attempt to secure the co-operation of Brutus, as Cassius was on terms of intimacy with him on account of a family connection. Cassius's wife was the sister of Brutus.

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This had made the two men intimate associates and warm friends in former years, though they had been recently somewhat estranged from each other on account of having been competitors for the same offices and honors. In these contests, Caesar had decided in favor of Brutus. "Cassius," said he, on one such occasion, "gives the best reasons; but I cannot refuse Brutus anything he asks for." In fact, Caesar had conceived a strong personal friendship for Brutus, and believed him to be entirely devoted to his cause. Cassius, however, sought an interview with Brutus, with a view of engaging him in his design. He easily effected his own reconciliation with him, as he had himself been the offended party in their estrangement from each other. He asked Brutus whether he intended to be present in the Senate on the Ides of March, when the friends of Caesar, as was understood, were intending to present him with the crown. Brutus said he should not be there. "But suppose," said Cassius, "we are specially summoned."

"Then," said Brutus, "I shall go, and shall be ready to die if necessary to defend the liberty of my country." Cassius then assured Brutus that there were many other Roman citizens, of the highest rank, who were animated by the same determination, and that they all looked up to him to lead and direct them in the work which it was now very evident must be done. "Men look," said Cassius, "to other praetors to entertain them with games, spectacles, and shows, but they have very different ideas in respect to you. Your character, your name, your position, your ancestry, and the course of conduct, which you have already always pursued, inspire the whole city with the hope that you are to be their deliverer.

The citizens are all ready to aid you and to sustain you at the hazard of their lives; but they look to you to go forward, and to act in their name and in their behalf, in the crisis which is now approaching." Men of a very calm exterior are often susceptible of the profoundest agitations within, the emotions seeming to be sometimes all the more

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permanent and uncontrollable from the absence of outward display. Brutus said little, but his soul was excited and fired by Cassius's words.

There was a struggle in his soul between his grateful sense of his political obligations to Caesar and his personal attachment to him on the one hand, and, on the other, a certain stern Roman conviction that everything should be sacrificed, even friendship and gratitude, as well as fortune and life, to the welfare of his country. He acceded to the plan, and began forthwith to enter upon the necessary measures for putting it into execution.

There was a certain general, named Ligurius, who had been in Pompey's army, and whose hostility to Caesar had never been really subdued. He was now sick. Brutus went to see him. He found him in his bed. The excitement in Rome was so intense, though the expressions of it were suppressed and restrained, that everyone was expecting continually some great event, and every motion and look was interpreted to have some deep meaning. Ligurius read in the countenance of Brutus, as he approached his bedside, that he had not come on any trifling errand. "Ligurius," said Brutus, "this is not a time for you to be sick." "Brutus," replied Ligurius, rising at once from his couch, "if you have any enterprise in mind that is worthy of you, I am well." Brutus explained to the sick man their design, and he entered into it with ardor.

The plan was divulged to one after another of such men as the conspirators supposed most worthy of confidence in such a desperate undertaking, and meetings for consultation were held to determine what plan to adopt for finally accomplishing their end. It was agreed that Caesar must be slain; but the time, the place, and the manner in which the deed should be performed were all yet undecided. Various plans were proposed in the

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consultations, which the conspirators held; but there was one thing peculiar to them all, which was, that they did not any of them contemplate or provide for anything like secrecy in the commission of the deed. It was to be performed in the most open and public manner. With a stern and undaunted boldness, which has always been considered by mankind as truly sublime, they determined that, in respect to the actual execution itself of the solemn judgment, which they had pronounced, there should be nothing private or concealed.

They thought over the various public situations in which they might find Caesar, and where they might strike him down, only to select the one which would be most public of all. They kept, of course, their preliminary counsels private, to prevent the adoption of measures for counteracting them; but they were to perform the deed in such a manner as that, so soon as it was performed, they should stand out to view, exposed fully to the gaze of all mankind as the authors, of it.

They planned no retreat, no concealment, no protection whatever for themselves, seeming to feel that the deed which they were about to perform, of destroying the master and monarch of the world, was a deed in its own nature so grand and sublime as to raise the perpetrators of it entirely above all considerations relating to their own personal safety. Their plan, therefore, was to keep their consultations and arrangements secret until they were prepared to strike the blow, then to strike it in the most public and imposing manner possible, and calmly afterward to await the consequences.

In this view of the subject, they decided that the chamber of the Roman Senate was the proper place, and the Ides of March, the day on which he was appointed to be crowned, was the proper time for Caesar to be slain.

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THE ASSASSINATION

According to the account given by his historians, Caesar received many warnings of his approaching fate, which, however, he would not heed. Many of these warnings were strange portents and prodigies, which the philosophical writers who recorded them half believed themselves, and which they were always ready to add to their narratives even if they did not believe them, on account of the great influence which such an introduction of the supernatural and the divine had with readers in those days in enhancing the dignity and the dramatic interest of the story. These warnings were as follows:

At Capua, which was a great city at some distance south of Rome, the second, in fact, in Italy, and the one which Hannibal had proposed to make his capital, some workmen were removing certain ancient sepulchers to make room for the foundations of a splendid edifice which, among his other plans for the embellishment of the cities of Italy, Caesar was intending to have erected there.

As the excavations advanced, the workmen came at last to an ancient tomb, which proved to be that of the original founder of Capua; and, in bringing out the sarcophagus, they found an inscription, worked upon a brass plate, and in the Greek character, predicting that if those remains were ever disturbed, a great member of the Julian family would be assassinated by his own friends, and his death would be followed by extended devastations throughout all Italy.

The horses, too, with which Caesar had passed the Rubicon, and which had been, ever since that time, living in honorable retirement in a splendid park which Caesar had provided for them, by some mysterious instinct, or from some divine communication, had

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warning of the approach of their great benefactor's end. They refused their food, and walked about with melancholy and dejected looks, mourning apparently, and in a manner almost human, some impending grief.

There was a class of prophets in those days called by a name which has been translated soothsayers . These soothsayers were able, as was supposed, to look somewhat into futurity — dimly and doubtfully, it is true, but really, by means of certain appearances exhibited by the bodies of the animals offered in sacrifices These soothsayers were consulted on all important occasions; and if the auspices proved unfavorable when any great enterprise was about to be undertaken, it was often, on that account, abandoned or postponed.

One of these soothsayers, named Spurrinna, came to Caesar one day, and informed him that he had found, by means of a public sacrifice which he had just been offering, that there was a great and mysterious danger impending over him, which was connected in some way with the Ides of March, and he counseled him to be particularly cautious and circumspect until that day should have passed.

The Senate were to meet on the Ides of March in a new and splendid edifice, which had been erected for their use by Pompey. There was in the interior of the building, among other decorations, a statue of Pompey. The day before the Ides of March, some birds of prey from a neighboring grove came flying into this hall, pursuing a little wren with a sprig of laurel in its mouth. The birds tore the wren to pieces, the laurel dropping from its bill to the marble pavement of the floor below. Now, as Caesar had been always accustomed to wear a crown of laurel on great occasions, and had always evinced a particular fondness for that decoration, that plant had come to be considered his own

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proper badge, and the fall of the laurel, therefore, was naturally thought to portend some great calamity to him.

The night before the Ides of March Caesar could not sleep. It would not seem, however, to be necessary to suppose any thing supernatural to account for his wakefulness. He lay upon his bed restless and excited, or if he fell into a momentary slumber, his thoughts, instead of finding repose, were only plunged into greater agitations, produced by strange, and, as he thought, supernatural dreams. He imagined that he ascended into the skies, and was received there by Jupiter, the supreme divinity, as an associate and equal. While shaking hands with the great father of gods and men, the sleeper was startled by a frightful sound. He awoke, and found his wife Calpurnia groaning and struggling in her sleep. He saw her by the moonlight, which was shining into the room. He spoke to her, and aroused her. After staring wildly for a moment till she had recovered her thoughts, she said that she had had a dreadful dream.

She had dreamed that the roof of the house had fallen in, and that, at the same instant, the doors had been burst open, and some robber or assassin had stabbed her husband as he was lying in her arms. The philosophy of those days found in these dreams mysterious and preternatural warnings of impending danger; that of ours, however, sees nothing either in the absurd sacrilegiousness of Caesar's thoughts, or his wife's incoherent and inconsistent images of terror — nothing more than the natural and proper effects, on the one hand, of the insatiable ambition of man, and, on the other, of the conjugal affection and solicitude of woman.

The ancient sculptors carved out images of men, by the forms and lineaments of which we see that the physical characteristics of humanity have not changed. History seems to do the same with the affections and passions of the soul. The dreams of Caesar and his

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wife on the night before the Ides of March, as thus recorded, form a sort of spiritual statue, which remains from generation to generation, to show us how precisely all the inward workings of human nature are from age to age the same.

When the morning came Caesar and Calpurnia arose, both restless and ill at ease. Caesar ordered the auspices to be consulted with reference to the intended proceedings of the day. The soothsayers came in in due time, and reported that the result was unfavorable. Calpurnia, too, earnestly entreated her husband not to go to the senate-house that day. She had a very strong presentiment that, if he did go, some great calamity would ensue. Caesar himself hesitated. He was half inclined to yield, and postpone his coronation to another occasion.

In the course of the day, while Caesar was in this state of doubt and uncertainty, one of the conspirators, named Decimus Brutus, came in. This Brutus was not a man of any extraordinary courage or energy, but he had been invited by the other conspirators to join them, on account of his having under his charge a large number of gladiators, who, being desperate and reckless men, would constitute a very suitable armed force for them to call in to their aid in case of any emergency arising which should require it.

The conspirators having thus all their plans arranged, Decimus Brutus was commissioned to call at Caesar's house when the time approached for the assembling of the Senate, both to avert suspicion from Caesar's mind, and to assure himself that nothing had been discovered. It was in the afternoon, the time for the meeting of the senators having been fixed at five o'clock. Decimus Brutus found Caesar troubled and perplexed, and uncertain what to do. After hearing what he had to say, he replied by urging him to go by all means to the senate-house, as he had intended. "You have formally called the Senate together," said he, "and they are now assembling.

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They are all prepared to confer upon you the rank and title of king, not only in Parthia, while you are conducting this war but everywhere, by sea and land, except in Italy. And now, while they are all in their places, waiting to consummate the great act, how absurd will it be for you to send them word to go home again, and come back some other day, when Calpurnia shall have had better dreams!"

He urged, too, that, even if Caesar was determined to put off the action of the Senate to another day, he was imperiously bound to go himself and adjourn the session in person. So saying, he took the hesitating potentate by the arm, and adding to his arguments a little gentle force, conducted him along. The conspirators supposed that all was safe. The fact was, however, that all had been discovered. There was a certain Greek, a teacher of oratory, named Artemidorus. He had contrived to learn something of the plot from some of the conspirators who were his pupils.

He wrote a brief statement of the leading particulars, and, having no other mode of access to Caesar, he determined to hand it to him on the way as he went to the senate-house. Of course, the occasion was one of great public interest, and crowds had assembled in the streets to see the great conqueror as he went along. As usual at such times, when powerful officers of state appear in public, many people came up to present petitions to him as he passed. These he received, and handed them, without reading, to his secretary who attended him, as if to have them preserved for future examination. Artemidorus, who was waiting for his opportunity, when he perceived what disposition Caesar made of the papers which were given to him, began to be afraid that his own communication would not be attended to until it was too late.

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He accordingly pressed up near to Caesar, refusing to allow any one else to pass the paper in; and when, at last, he obtained an opportunity, he gave it directly into Caesar's hands saying to him, "Read this immediately: it concerns yourself, and is of the utmost importance" Caesar took the paper and attempted to read it, but new petitions and other interruptions constantly prevented him; finally he gave up the attempt, and went on his way, receiving and passing to his secretary all other papers, but retaining this paper of Artemidorus in his hand.

Caesar passed Spurinna on his way to the senate-house — the soothsayer who had predicted some great danger connected with the Ides of March. As soon as he recognized him, he accosted him with the words, "Well, Spurinna, the Ides of March have come, and I am safe." "Yes," replied Spurinna, "they have come, but they are not yet over."

At length he arrived at the senate-house, with the paper of Artemidorus still unread in his hand. The senators were all convened, the leading conspirators among them. They all rose to receive Caesar as he entered. Caesar advanced to the seat provided for him, and, when he was seated, the senators themselves sat down. The moment had now arrived, and the conspirators, with pale looks and beating hearts, felt that now or never the deed was to be done. It requires a very considerable degree of physical courage and hardihood for men to come to a calm and deliberate decision that they will kill one whom they hate, and, still more, actually to strike the blow, even when under the immediate impulse of passion.

But men who are perfectly capable of either of these often find their resolution fail them as the time comes for striking a dagger into the living flesh of their victim, when he sits at ease and unconcerned before them, unarmed and defenseless, and doing nothing to excite those feelings of irritation and anger which are generally found so necessary to nerve the

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human arm to such deeds. Utter defenselessness is accordingly, sometimes, a greater protection than an armor of steel.

Even Cassius himself, the originator and the soul of the whole enterprise, found his courage hardly adequate to the work now that the moment had arrived; and, in order to arouse the necessary excitement in his soul, he looked up to the statue of Pompey, Caesar's ancient and most formidable enemy, and invoked its aid. It gave him its aid. It inspired him with some portion of the enmity with which the soul of its great original had burned; and thus the soul of the living assassin was nerved to its work by a sort of sympathy with a block of stone.

Foreseeing the necessity of something like a stimulus to action when the immediate moment for action should arrive, the conspirators had agreed that, as soon as Caesar was seated, they would approach him with a petition, which he would probably refuse, and then, gathering around him, they would urge him with their importunities, so as to produce, in the confusion, a sort of excitement that would make it easier for them to strike the blow.

There was one person, a relative and friend of Caesar's, named Marcus Antonius, called commonly, however, in English narratives, Marc Antony, the same who has been already mentioned as having been subsequently connected with Cleopatra. He was a very energetic and determined man, who, they thought, might possibly attempt to defend him. To prevent this, one of the conspirators had been designated to take him aside, and occupy his attention with some pretended subject of discourse, ready, at the same time, to resist and prevent his interference if he should show himself inclined to offer any.

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Things being thus arranged, the petitioner, as had been agreed, advanced to Caesar with his petition, others coming up at the same time as if to second the request. The object of the petition was to ask for the pardon of the brother of one of the conspirators. Caesar declined granting it. The others then crowded around him, urging him to grant the request with pressing importunities, all apparently reluctant to strike the first blow. Caesar began to be alarmed, and attempted to repel them. One of them then pulled down his robe from his neck to lay it bare. Caesar arose, exclaiming, "But this is violence." At the same instant, one of the conspirators struck at him with his sword, and wounded him slightly in the neck.

All was now terror, outcry, and confusion. Caesar had no time to draw his sword, but fought a moment with his style, a sharp instrument of iron with which they wrote, in those days, on waxen tablets, and which he happened then to have in his hand. With this instrument he ran one of his enemies through the arm.

This resistance was just what was necessary to excite the conspirators, and give them the requisite resolution to finish their work. Caesar soon saw the swords, accordingly, gleaming all around him, and thrusting themselves at him on every side.

The senators rose in confusion and dismay, perfectly thunderstruck at the scene, and not knowing what to do. Antony perceived that all resistance on his part would be unavailing, and accordingly did not attempt any. Caesar defended himself alone for a few minutes as well as he could, looking all around him in vain for help, and retreating at the same time toward the pedestal of Pompey's statue. At length, when he saw Brutus among his murderers, he exclaimed, "And you too, Brutus?" and seemed from that moment to give up in despair. He drew his robe over his face, and soon fell under the wounds which he received.

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His blood ran out upon the pavement at the foot of Pompey's statue, as if his death were a sacrifice offered to appease his ancient enemy's revenge.

In the midst of the scene, Brutus made an attempt to address the senators, and to vindicate what they had done, but the confusion and excitement were so great that it was impossible that anything could be heard. The senators were, in fact, rapidly leaving the place, going off in every direction, and spreading the tidings over the city. The event, of course, produced universal commotion. The citizens began to close their shops, and some to barricade their houses, while others hurried to and fro about the streets, anxiously inquiring for intelligence, and wondering what dreadful event was next to be expected.

Antony and Lepidus, who were Caesar's two most faithful and influential friends, not knowing how extensive the conspiracy might be, nor how far the hostility to Caesar and his party might extend, fled, and, not daring to go to their own houses, lest the assassins or their confederates might pursue them there, sought concealment in the houses of friends on whom they supposed they could rely and who were willing to receive them.

In the mean time, the conspirators, glorying in the deed which they had perpetrated, and congratulating each other on the successful issue of their enterprise, sallied forth together from the senate-house, leaving the body of their victim weltering in its blood, and marched, with drawn swords in their hands, along the streets from the senate-house to the Capitol. Brutus went at the head of them, preceded by a liberty cap borne upon the point of a spear, and with his bloody dagger in his hand.

The Capitol was the citadel, built magnificently upon the Capitoline Hill, and surrounded by temples, and other sacred and civil edifices, which made the spot the architectural wonder of the world. As Brutus and his company proceeded thither, they announced to

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the citizens, as they went along, the great deed of deliverance, which they had wrought out for the country. Instead of seeking concealment, they gloried in the work which they had done, and they so far succeeded in inspiring others with a portion of their enthusiasm, that some men who had really taken no part in the deed joined Brutus and his company in their march, to obtain by stealth a share in the glory.

The body of Caesar lay for some time unheeded where it had fallen, the attention of every one being turned to the excitement, which was extending through the city, and to the expectation of other great events which might suddenly develop themselves in other quarters of Rome. There were left only three of Caesar's slaves, who gathered around the body to look at the wounds. They counted them, and found the number twenty-three. It shows, however, how strikingly, and with what reluctance, the actors in this tragedy came up to their work at last, that of all these twenty-three wounds only one was a mortal one. In fact, it is probable that, while all of the conspirators struck the victim in their turn, to fulfill the pledge which they had given to one another that they would every one inflict a wound, each one hoped that the fatal blow would be given, after all, by some other hand than his own.

At last, the slaves decided to convey the body home. They obtained a sort of chair, which was made to be borne by poles, and placed the body upon it. Then, lifting at the three handles, and allowing the fourth to hang unsupported for want of a man, they bore the ghastly remains home to the distracted Calpurnia. The next day Brutus and his associates called an assembly of the people in the Forum, and made an address to them, explaining the motives which had led them to the commission of the deed, and vindicating the necessity and the justice of it. The people received these explanations in silence. They expressed neither approbation nor displeasure. It was not, in fact, to be expected that they would feel or evince any satisfaction at the loss of their master.

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He had been their champion, and, as they believed, their friend. The removal of Caesar brought no accession of power nor increase of liberty to them. It might have been a gain to ambitious senators, or powerful generals, or high officers of state, by removing a successful rival out of their way, but it seemed to promise little advantage to the community at large, other than the changing of one despotism for another. Besides, a populace who know that they must be governed, prefer generally, if they must submit to some control, to yield their submission to someone master spirit whom they can look up to as a great and acknowledged superior. They had rather have a Caesar than a Senate to command them.

The higher authorities, however, were, at might have been expected, disposed to acquiesce in the removal of Caesar from his intended throne. The Senate met, and passed an act of indemnity, to shield the conspirators from all legal liability for the deed they had done. In order, however, to satisfy the people too, as far as possible, they decreed divine honors to Caesar, confirmed and ratified all that he had done while in the exercise of supreme power, and appointed a time for the funeral, ordering arrangements to be made for a very pompous celebration of it.

A will was soon found, which Caesar, it seems, had made some time before. Calpurnia's father proposed that this will should be opened and read in public at Antony's house; and this was accordingly done. The provisions of the will were, many of them, of such a character as renewed the feelings of interest and sympathy which the people of Rome had begun to cherish for Caesar's memory. His vast estate was divided chiefly among the children of his sister, as he had no children of his own, while the very men who had been most prominent in his assassination were named as trustees and guardians of the property; and one of them, Decimus Brutus, the one who had been so urgent to conduct him to the senate-house, was a second heir.

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He had some splendid gardens near the Tiber, which he bequeathed to the citizens of Rome, and a large amount of money also, to be divided among them, sufficient to give every man a considerable sum.

The time for the celebration of the funeral ceremonies was made known by proclamation, and, as the concourse of strangers and citizens of Rome was likely to be so great as to forbid the forming of all into one procession without consuming more than one day, the various classes of the community were invited to come, each in their own way, to the Field of Mars, bringing with them such insignia, offerings, and oblations as they pleased. The Field of Mars was an immense parade ground, reserved for military reviews, spectacles, and shows.

A funeral pile was erected here for the burning of the body. There was to be a funeral discourse pronounced, and Marc Antony had been designated to perform this duty. The body had been placed in a gilded bed, under a magnificent canopy in the form of a temple, before the rostra where the funeral discourse was to be pronounced. The bed was covered with scarlet and cloth of gold and at the head of it was laid the robe in which Caesar had been slain. It was stained with blood, and pierced with the holes that the swords and daggers of the conspirators had made.

Marc Antony, instead of pronouncing a formal panegyric upon his deceased friend, ordered a crier to read the decrees of the Senate, in which all honors, human and divine, had been ascribed to Caesar. He then added a few words of his own. The bed was then taken up, with the body upon it, and borne out into the Forum, preparatory to conveying it to the pile which had been prepared for it upon the Field of Mars. A question, however, here arose among the multitude assembled in respect to the proper place for burning the body.

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The people seemed inclined to select the most honorable place, which could be found within the limits of the city. Some proposed a beautiful temple on the Capitoline Hill. Others wished to take it to the senate-house, where he had been slain. The Senate, and those who were less inclined to pay extravagant honors to the departed hero, were in favor of some more retired spot, under pretense that the buildings of the city would be endangered by the fire. This discussion was fast becoming a dispute, when it was suddenly ended by two men, with swords at their sides and knees in their hands, forcing their way through the crowd with lighted torches, and setting the bed and its canopy on fire where it lay.

This settled the question, and the whole company were soon in the wildest excitement with the work of building up a funeral pile upon the spot. At first they brought fagots and threw upon the fire, then benches from the neighboring courts and porticoes, and then any thing combustible which came to hand. The honor done to the memory of a deceased hero was, in some sense, in proportion to the greatness of his funeral pile, and all the populace on this occasion began soon to seize everything they could find, appropriate and unappropriate, provided that it would increase the flame.

The soldiers threw on their lances and spears, the musicians their instruments, and others stripped off the cloths and trappings from the furniture of the procession, and heaped them upon the burning pile. So fierce and extensive was the fire, that it spread to some of the neighboring houses, and required great efforts to prevent a general conflagration. The people, too, became greatly excited by the scene. They lighted torches by the fire, and went to the houses of Brutus and Cassius, threatening vengeance upon them for the murder of Caesar. The authorities succeeded though with infinite difficulty, in protecting Brutus and Cassius from the violence of the mob, but they seized one unfortunate citizen

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of the name of Cinna, thinking it a certain Cinna who had been known as an enemy of Caesar. They cut off his head, notwithstanding his shrieks and cries, and carried it about the city on the tip of a pike, a dreadful symbol of their hostility to the enemies of Caesar. As frequently happens, however, in such deeds of sudden violence, these hasty and lawless avengers found afterward that they had made a mistake, and beheaded the wrong man.

The Roman people erected a column to the memory of Caesar, on which they placed the inscription, "To THE FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY." They fixed the figure of a star upon the summit of it, and some time afterward, while the people were celebrating some games in honor of his memory, a great comet blazed for seven nights in the sky, which they recognized as the mighty hero's soul reposing in heaven.

THE END